

The Mercy of God Almighty, Part 3 - Romans 9:10-13 - July 22nd, 2012

- Today's teaching will be part three of series I've titled; "The Mercy of God Almighty." In the first 9 verses, we've been able to answer 3 questions.
- In the first five verses, we were able to answer two very big questions the first of which was, how is it that I, like Paul, can have a heart for the lost.
- The second big question we were able to answer was how can I love someone who hates my guts. Then in verses 6-9 we answered our 3rd one.

- The third question was how to know whether or not I, or someone I know, is a true Christian or not. Now, verses 10-13 bring us to a 4th question.
- However, before we take and tackle the next one, I think it's incumbent upon me to answer the first three for the benefit of those who weren't here.
- For those who were here, perhaps you'll indulge me for just a moment, and as I quickly go over these, it can be for you, a review of sorts as well.

1. How can I have a heart for the lost? (Verses 1-2)

- Here, the beloved Apostle speaks the truth in love, of this great sorrow and unceasing anguish that's in his heart concerning their being lost.
- The answer to the question of how I, like Paul, could have such an anguishing heart for the lost is by getting my eyes off of the puny and the petty.
- In other words, Paul didn't make it about that which they had done to him, instead, he made it about that which had been done for him, by Jesus.

2. How can I love those who hate me? (Verses 3-5)

- Paul continues to expound on why he's anguishing so, saying, he wishes he himself were cursed for the sake of those of his own Jewish race.
- It's important to know how that Paul, was hated by his Jewish brethren, and that they had spoken such evil about him, in their rejection of him.
- The answer to the question of how, I like Paul, can love those who hate me, is by praying for them, which makes it hard to remain hurt by them.

3. How can I know if I'm a true Christian? (Verses 6-9)

- Here, Paul brings father Abraham into the discussion in order to answer the question of why not all who are Israel's descendants are truly Israel.
- The reason he does this is, they fancied themselves being entitled to the promise simply as the natural born descendants of the second born Son.
- The answer to the question of how I can know if I'm a true Christian is by being supernaturally born again vis-à-vis the second birth like Isaac.

- I think I would be grossly remiss were I not to give a brief answer to the question of how it is that one can know if they've been born again or not.
- The short answer is simply that like a newborn baby craves mother's milk, so too will the newborn Christian crave the milk of God's Word as well.
- Then, just as a baby will grow and go from milk to meat and from crawling to walking then running, so too will the born again believer do the same.

4. How can a God of love hate someone? (Verses 10-13)

(10) Not only that, but Rebekah's children had one and the same father, our father Isaac. (11) Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God's purpose in election might stand: (12) not by works but by him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger." (13) Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

- v10-11 Paul goes from Isaac to Jacob saying, Rebekah's children had one and the same father, yet before their birth or sin, God's election stood.
- v12 He expounds on and explains that it's not by works but by Him Who calls that she's told how that Esau the older will serve Jacob the younger.
- v13 We have what could arguably be one of the most difficult verses in all of the Bible to grasp when he says; "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

- Let's first try to unload this passage so as to see our way clear to begin the process of answering this question concerning God's hatred of Esau.
- This is one of those places in God's Word where context is paramount in its importance to understanding what's being said or better said not said.
- What the Holy Spirit is saying through what the Apostle Paul is writing is, just like the promise came through Isaac, so too was it through Jacob.

- The common denominator between Isaac and Jacob is that they're both the ones God would choose and it's based on that which God foreknew.
- In other words, God made His decision based on what He knew all of them would do before they were even born and before they did good or bad.
- He not only foreknew what Jacob would do, He also knew what Esau would do, namely, that he would hate and despise, thus reject his birthright.

- Conversely, he foreknew Jacob would so value that birthright, and the promise packaged with it, he would unnecessarily resort to deceit to get it.
- Since God already knew what they would do before they were born, God chose them knowing that they would choose Him after they were born.
- I would suggest that it's for this same reason that God rejected Esau before he was born He knew that Esau would reject Him after He was born.

- Actually, it's with this understanding that we're now able to answer the question, still on the table, of how it is possible for a God of love, to hate.
- However, in order to give the right answer you must have the right question. A wrong question has not a right answer, and such is the case here.
- Let me explain, it's not so much a question of God hating someone as much as it is a question of God loving someone. Consider this account:

William Newell comments on this particular occasion when a woman confronted Charles Spurgeon concerning God's hatred of Esau. Newell of this writes; "The woman says to Mr. Spurgeon, 'I cannot understand why God should say that He hated Esau.' 'That,' Spurgeon replied, 'is not my difficulty, madam. My trouble is to understand how God could love Jacob.'"

- If you will but allow me little time here, I'd like to take this a step further, because I'm not so convinced that God hated Esau as we know hatred.
- Incidentally, I'm not alone in this thought. One commentator suggests God didn't hate Esau He simply loved Esau less, in that Esau rejected Him.
- I have to concur in the sense that God will neither force Himself, nor His love, on anyone, which here again goes contrary to Calvinist teachings.

- Be that as it may and suffice it to say, while Romans 8 dealt a decimating blow to Calvinism Romans 9 puts the final nail in the coffin of Calvinism.
- A few weeks ago, I was talking with a sister who visits our fellowship every so often about Calvinism and how she had come out of Calvinism.
- In anticipation of this chapter I asked her to email me some of her material as it relates to this false doctrine of election, and I'll share it in closing.

"Jacob believed and was beloved in God's foreknowledge. ...This is an oversimplified picture, but think about our own country's election process. We elect candidates based on what we know of their platform. Their platform is what they believe. Responsible citizens elect a candidate based on what the candidate believes. [It's the] same with God, He elects based on what we believe. He elects those who believe Him, His provision for sin, and His promises. Therefore, God chose Jacob who believed by faith and rejected Esau who didn't believe.